

773 Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-
 [372] dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise
 of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame.
 This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked
 him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw
 the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudasi* had
 inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only
 light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them
 warm.¹⁴

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the
 blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*,
 [821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread
 over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the
 creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in
 Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to
 Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the
 water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the
 neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga*
 [823] rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much
 with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird,
 ● [825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-
 water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-
 osprey (*Pandion halioetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus*
leucogaster).¹⁵

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-
 water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst
 Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

[411] *Jirakupai* was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male
 spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the
 female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both
 forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

¹⁴ The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood,
 and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

¹⁵ The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and
Mudasi, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each case they
 transformed themselves from men into birds.

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Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men 773 from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury.

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* 773 becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*). 825

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his tail, on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the 532^x bark painting, Pl. 16a.

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrunngu (Karlslake Island), three men, 773 *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurumu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabrumba*.

Mudati and *Parabrumba* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurumu*, who wanted *Parabrumba* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurumu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot¹⁸ *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurumu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurumu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurumu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [925]

¹⁸ These bandicoots build slimy grass shelters under which they hide.

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudati* fell to the ground calling
 825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite
 (• *Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.¹⁷

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudati's* brother, *Pilibilininga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*guthi-guthi*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilininga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

773 *Jurumu* appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*, and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

[825] *Kilpuruni*, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket lizard (*Chamydactylus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

[171] ¹⁷ A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

- 773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. Even now, on calm days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.²⁴
- [825]

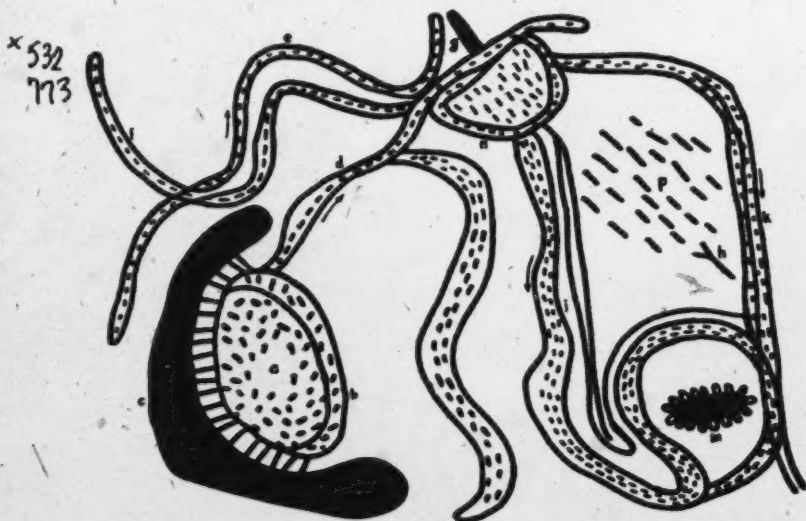


FIG. 3. Spear-throwing Contest of *Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamuni* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimika*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimika* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 258), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *d*, and the

[171] ²⁴ This is the same fish as the *Twinika* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

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women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final *palaneri* rituals. 532^x
773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.⁸⁵ Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *k*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *n*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a 773
close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today.

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply [821]
scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. *Bima*, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, [825]
became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the [821]
torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

⁸⁵ At a *palaneri* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jikungfaheni*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kaniprak wanikali kurinari*", meaning [796]
"We throw spears to find out who goes farthest."

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of
82] *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that
● [825] wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamp-lands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

512 Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *sapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Matudaiianini*, span the heavens. It is then that the dried perspiration which the *Matudaiianini* rub from their bodies,
[512] falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst
778 Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	Totem	Relationship
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of <i>Mudungkala</i>
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle) Wuriupranala (sun)	Not known Daughter of <i>Mudungkala</i>
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of <i>Tukimbini</i>
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of <i>Wuriupranala</i>
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

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Five bark paintings, Pla. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 38A, deal with Wailu^{532x} and its inhabitants. 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *Δ*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *z*, *z*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 38A, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman,^{532x} *Maratji*, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman,⁷⁷⁶ *Tomituka*.

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka*, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 776 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy⁸²¹ over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so⁸²⁵ foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so much rain that everyone would be drowned.

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at^{532x} Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and 778 at *Δ*, *Δ*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp.

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of⁷⁷⁶ the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear-

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border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p, p*, etc., indicate rocks 532^x in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same 773 name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not able to gather further details of the mythical story.

The central vertical panel *a*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer sur- 532^x rounding white rectangle, *k, k*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at 778 *k, k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m, m*, etc., also form part of the island.

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*; another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another (unnamed) at *f, f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at *g, g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodylus porosus*, are indicated by [825] ● the white discs, *n, n*, etc.

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on 778 Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical [773] bird-men and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies (p. 133).

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller 532^x circles, *a, a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; 778 and *b, b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles, *c, c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d, d, d*, etc., deposits of white ochre, used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times.

At *e, e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre [824] deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body [386] decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* (p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created for food.

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, 773 south-western Bathurst Island. 778

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her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting from a sandbank, at *as*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, at *r* (left). 532^x
778

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinal. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamuni*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Ruli-773
junga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilania* (p. 32). 532^x
773

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilania* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palaneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 773
825
593

Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
 [593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse, except through a third person.

Pl. 20A, 2, describes the natural features at Arunumpl. A large rock, at *a*, was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *e*, made by the mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *h*, was made by a mangrove bird-man, *Uluhigini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at *m*; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wagjeniasi* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *prinitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *i*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tufini*, basket at *i* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

*The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili,
 at the Kaialili lagoon*

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapl, southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to *Murungimpili*, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,⁴⁴ the bamboo-
 [773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish, crabs and other sea creatures.

Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Bullati (De Vere) Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the source of Bullati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

⁴⁴ I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopadisi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] at its birthplace, that a new *mopadisi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopadisi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders⁵¹ with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopadisi*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopadisi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopadisi* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopadisi* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopadisi* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilaniq*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopadisi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopadisi*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopadisi* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

[781] Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopadisi* will follow an aboriginal too closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, [789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopadisi* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

[576] ⁵¹ This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

THE PUKAMUNI CEREMONY

61

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

(a) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulaninbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair⁸³ from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *okwiinga* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs.

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditi* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living⁸⁴ person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground

⁸³ In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

⁸⁴ After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditi* fear the light.

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditi*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep. But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave, a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing [302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanimburi's* body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse [751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband, then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "Yood, yood". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at *Purukupali's* ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives [775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the [775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,⁸⁸ laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced 535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands, palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatin's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatin* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimburi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

[825] ⁸⁸ The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

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while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint⁷⁶⁴ from his body (Pl. 232).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly, while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial,^[304] and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real.^[785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn, everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual, originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's* pukamuni, was supposed so to confuse the *mopadisi* of *Nulalini* that, should she leave the grave, she would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey, then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.^[775]

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopadisi* to warm herself and to cook her food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanambuwi*, who should have departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).^[775]

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark, was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 17, a, n), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp could not see it.⁷⁶⁵

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the⁷⁶¹ dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines, believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being, not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby^[825] looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, having been responsible for the death,⁶⁶ had changed himself into a^[754]

⁶⁶ This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Huxley and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the nature-man, *Papijunwan*, to an enemy.

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[825] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being
[76] recognised.

On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimburi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimburi* announced that a *Maraji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nulaini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Maraji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimburi* had seen in the mound.⁶⁷

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *putamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marewani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.⁶⁸

[775] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant
[784] foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurabuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanas* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's* *ilanas*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

[765] ⁶⁷ *Pulanimburi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wanaras* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] ⁶⁸ Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

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announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.⁶¹ 765

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadau*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurabuzi*, and the woman, *Prupadau*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadau* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the *milimika*. The *abuwia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *abuwia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song. [177] [531]

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30j), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru (Pl. 39A).⁶² Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Tadu-wala*) dance (Pl. 25c), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadau*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning. [825] 765

(b) The Second *Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanas* was performed about halfway between *Wurabuzi's* camp and the burial ground. 765

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanas* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, instead of referring, as in the first *ilanas*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to the locality of Wallu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniam-peri's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42). [533] [177]

This series of *ilanas* could be divided into five sections,

⁶¹ At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25a).

⁶² In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi. [114]

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanas*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alouwia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader [202] also ordered that the *purunkins* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuri* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanas*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanas*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

- (i) The *Ningau* songs and dances.
- (ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
- (iii) The *jibiru* (*Tjalasi*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningau Songs and Dances*

533 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following
539 *Ningau* songs. These are the literal translations.

765 "I am the head man of the *Ningau*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."⁸⁷

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ningau*s are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningau* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningau* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

● [825] ⁸⁷ This is the call of the *Ningau*s which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

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Neither *Jilungbaluni* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Niaguni*, walked round the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30x). 765
[534]

Following the *Niaguni* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katopi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30a) in the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *amburu* (Pl. 30v). [535]

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai, ai, ai*, which announced that the boat had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 765
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"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."

"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."

"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the *pumuti*, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs. 765

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island man, *Nilituma*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29a), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon. 535

The words of the *Tjalati* song were—

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly." [539]

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey and mosquito calls. [825]●

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765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Muruplaga
 533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women
 [535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

[539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."

"With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."

"Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these
 [535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action, their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinina*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old *Tjamalampua* to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then
 [535] danced the actions of the *jabiru*, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and one relating to the buffalo,⁷⁸ to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringipali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish: "*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the *Wanganui*, off south-western Bathurst Island.⁷⁹

[825] ⁷⁸ The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

⁷⁹ The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *Wanganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

^x532 At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, B).
 821 Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v*
 776 (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top
 773 left).

The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *k*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *e*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

773 At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.⁸⁰

821 It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would
 776 remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,⁸¹ and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.⁸²

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

⁸⁰ See p. 39 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[825] ⁸¹ A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[184] ⁸² Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

MELVILLE AND BATHURST ISLANDERS: A SHORT DESCRIPTION

By W. E. HARNEY and A. P. ELKIN¹

133 *Type of Country.* These islands are fairly large, measuring together about 150 miles from east to west and about 50 miles across the widest part. It is flat country composed of lateritic overburden covering a chalky and, in some places, a green stone full of fossils (Ammonites, Belemnites, etc.). At one time it was probably connected with the mainland, and the Apsley Strait which separates the two islands was in those days a continuation of the Adelaide River.

137 The timber is mostly stringybark, bloodwood, and fan palm, while along the shores is the usual jungle growth that can be found in these parts. Wallabies and other game are also present, but no porcupine (echidna), native cat or emu. Dingoes are plentiful. This is the reason for the natives having few dogs. The tame dog (wongine), while out hunting alone, is often destroyed by these dingoes, *diamini*. According to the natives, the dingoes do this because they are annoyed with the native dogs for taking some of their food. They (the *diamini*) are the rightful owners and the dog is an intruder.

142 *The Natives.* The natives of these islands, all of whom speak one language, are an unusual type. Curly hair predominates, but occasionally we find a straight-haired and a curly haired person in the same family. The cicatrices on their bodies are of the palm leaf pattern, though the straight lines of the mainland people may often be seen. They bear numerous small cuts on their foreheads and various parts of the body, caused by the practice of blood-letting as a cure for sickness.

157 304 101 *Tribal Name.* The tribal name of these people is an open question. At one time Mr. Harney called them Nimara, their word for language or talk. They have a word, Tunawini, one black man, but this term can embrace people of other tribes; it comes from the words *tiwi*, men (Hart's name for these natives, *Oceanis*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 167), *tiwi*, man, *tiya*, woman. They have, however, a term Worunguwe, which embraces them all—clans, horde places, people—and excludes other tribes such as Iwaidja, Larrakia, etc. The Iwaidja people call the Melville Island natives by that name, and Mr. Harney suggests that we should use it. Hart's term is not really a tribal name for it simply means people. Father McGrath suggests a name

[114] ¹ Mr. W. E. Harney is the exceptional layman who understands Aboriginal culture. For a number of years he and I have been collaborating in the study of a number of Aboriginal tribes of the Northern Territory. This article is a brief summary of information gathered by Mr. Harney while engaged in work on Melville and Bathurst Islands. It has been checked, discussed with Mr. Harney, and rewritten by myself. For some parts of this paper readers are advised to refer to the following articles by C. W. M. Hart: "The Tiwi of Melville and Bathurst Islands," *Oceanis*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 167-180, and "Personal Names Amongst the Tiwi," *Oceanis*, Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 80-90.—A. P. ELKIN.

Tiwi invoke the power of a yam

By JANE C. GOODALE

884 IN 1912 SIR BALDWIN SPENCER, a professor of biology at
 [114] the University of Melbourne, visited Melville Island, in
 [124] the Timor Sea. There he observed a Tiwi tribal ceremony in
 [14] which a number of young boys and girls participated in the
 [178] ritual preparation of a species of yam the Tiwi called
Kulama. Spencer wrote of this ceremony, "initiation of
 young men [and women] on Melville Island is intimately
 associated with what is known as a yam ceremony." This
 statement is particularly noteworthy, for, in 1954, when I
 visited the Tiwi for the first time and witnessed the annual
Kulama ceremony, no initiates took part. The ceremony,
 however, was still being performed with no significant
 changes in the complex ritual procedures that Spencer had
 described more than forty years before.

That the *Kulama* ceremony can and does take place with-
 out initiates does not mean that Spencer was wrong to con-
 sider it an important part of initiation into adult life. It
 does mean that many of the new generation of Tiwi believe
 [177] that such participation cannot prepare them adequately
 for a way of life that has been radically changed by contact
 with Western culture during the past fifty years.

In order to understand what this ceremony means to
 those who still perform it, one must first understand what
 the Tiwi consider to be adulthood. The Tiwi, now about a
 thousand in number, have lived for untold centuries on Mel-
 ville and Bathurst Islands, which are situated thirty miles
 north of Darwin, the capital city of Australia's Northern
 Territory. The islands and surrounding waters are well
 supplied with food, and fresh water is plentiful. Eco-
 nomically and technically the Tiwi have been remarkably
 conservative. They came to the islands as hunters and gath-
 erers of wild food, using crude chipped stone axes, dig-
 ging sticks, simple wooden spears, and hunting dogs, and
 found that little else was needed to exploit the natural re-
 sources and to provide themselves with a stable, varied,
 [224] and adequate diet. With the exception of the wallaby, the
 land animals of the two islands were small and nocturnal
 and could simply be collected during the day with little
 physical effort or skill. The few skills that were necessary
 were identifying tracks to find game and chopping out or
 digging up the sleeping animals. Young boys and girls were
 taught these techniques, since there was no essential sexual
 division of labor in food-collecting. Boys, however, re-

000 TIWI NATIVE on Melville Island expresses a grievance in an
 original song during the annual three-day *Kulama* ceremony.

[P. 11, (B)]

Tjipripu River, stands the Snake Bay Native Settlement where about 180-200 natives live along with two or three white employees of the Department of Welfare of the Australian Government and their families. 161
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It was not always like this. Formerly there were no white men and the tribe lived scattered throughout the entire countryside. The land was divided into "countries," each owned by a division of the tribe, and providing the owners with all necessary food, clothing, and shelter. Although many changes have come to the tribe in the last fifty years through contact with the early buffalo shooters, the missionaries, and the government, the individual Tiwi is, with few exceptions, a hunter at heart. He may have acquired new skills such as a knowledge of English, and the ability to work at cutting lumber in the sawmill or driving a truck, but in doing so he has not lost the skill to track down the wallabies or possums in the bush or fish in the sea, nor has he lost the desire to do so. There are, of course, exceptions—those who prefer working in the settlement or in Darwin and attempt to make their own way into the white man's world. A few are successful and never return; others, not so successful, try it for a while and return to alternate between doing their bit in the settlement and going on "vacation" into the bush when they feel the need of a change of pace. 361
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[631]
[224]
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By the end of October I too felt the need of a change of scene. I had been living at the settlement or close to it for seven months. I had watched the Tiwi as they built the settlement buildings, started formal schooling and helped run the everyday affairs of a community of two hundred souls. I had watched them in the evenings when they often performed portions of their lengthy ceremonies necessary to the proper burial of a fellow tribal member. I had accompanied them on weekends whenever they had camped in the surrounding countryside, and had gathered and consumed the tasty native food as a variation to corned beef, vegetables, flour, tea, and sugar of the settlement menu. But after seven months I too grew tired of corned beef, and as the daily increasing humidity announced the approach of the wet season I was anxious to go hunting once more before travel became difficult. Another sign of the approaching change of seasons, observed with great interest by the natives, 123
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Fig. 2. Dolly. The painted necklace is her ornament for the day.

was the increasing flocks of geese flying over to the east of us to their feeding grounds in the fresh-water swamps at the head of the Paluwiunga River. Since the Superintendent of the settlement had a plan to build a permanent camp for future crocodile hunts near this very spot, this seemed an ideal time for all concerned to make a trip to this area.

As there was a shortage of water transport (only four dug-out canoes and one small motor launch), the main group of twenty men, women, and children was taken in the canoes across Snake Bay the day before and left to "foot-walk" along the coast to the Paluwiunga. The Superintendent and his son went ahead in the

115 motor launch and I followed the next day in "number one" canoe
123 with my chosen companions. I had originally invited my chief
[626] informant Dolly and her husband Malony, but they had had a
[837] "proper row" a few nights previously and weren't speaking. Dolly
would have come alone because the object of this row, her boy-friend, Billy-Two, was going, but public opinion was too strong in view of the very recent objection by her husband, and she begged out of the trip. In their place the choice of Albert and Agnes was obvious. They had been close associates of the expedition and of mine since our arrival. They were a young couple in their early twenties, but recently married, and very much in love—there would be no complicating boy-friend problems with them. But above all, Albert loved to hunt and he was a good man to be with in the bush. He was a quiet, serious young man and very modest about his accomplishments. Because of this he was not a good informant for native lore or customs; he would always refer us to the old men who knew much more than he. However, he was a conformist to these